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Board Awards Contract to Demolish Ujima Village

The Board of Supervisors Tuesday awarded a contract to National Demolition Contractors to remove the hazardous materials from the Ujima Village housing development and demolish the property located at 941 East 126th Street in the unincorporated area of Willowbrook.

Residents moved out of the 300-unit complex in August 2010, after an environmental investigation found asbestos and other hazardous materials on the property. Since that time, the empty complex has become a source of decay and community blight.

Today's action paves the way for new uses of the property by authorizing the contractor to begin demolition this summer. The County of Los Angeles is committed to using the space for parkland and recreational purposes and will seek feedback from interested community residents and stakeholders on the site's design.

"We are starting fresh and setting a new path for the Willowbrook community," said Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. "Once Ujima Village is demolished, the site can be re-envisioned and redeveloped into a quality, community serving destination."

The recreational improvements will be planned in consultation with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. The agency is responsible for

overseeing an environmental investigation and clean up activities at the site and within the surrounding community.

Prior to the demolition of Ujima Village, the privately operated daycare center Honey's Little Angels, which is adjacent to Ujima Village, will be relocated to a County building located at 8300 South Vermont Avenue in Athens. On June 6, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas' motion was unanimously adopted by the Board to facilitate the prompt relocation of the daycare center.

As is typical of many structures built before 1978, the units in Ujima Village were found to have both lead-based paint and asbestos-containing materials. Although the Los Angeles County Housing Authority considered investing in the rehabilitation of the property, the rent revenue would not cover the cost of the significant repairs and remediation that would have been required to eliminate the hazardous material found throughout the property.

The demolition cost of \$3 million will be funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Second Supervisorial District Community Development Block Grant funds and Second Supervisorial District discretionary funds.

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